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硕 士 学 位 论 文

从分裂到融合
——《幸存者回忆录》的荣格心理学解读

From Disintegration to Reintegration:

A Jungian Psychoanalysis of *The Memoirs of a Survivor*

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Abstract

As the 2007 Nobel Prize winner in Literature, Doris Lessing is one of the most influential postwar writers in the world nowadays. Stressing her responsibility towards the society as a writer, Lessing has never stopped paying attention to the spiritual plights of modern people who are trapped in the fragmentary world today. This concern turns out to be a consistent theme throughout her canon and it is best illustrated in *The Memoirs of a Survivor*. Concerning this novel, critical arguments are mainly focused on the three aspects: the existence of the world behind the wall, the relationship between the narrator and Emily Kate Cartright, and also the obscure ending scene. This thesis intends to present a clear answer to these issues by systematically analyzing the images and incidents in both of the two worlds in the novel in the light of Jungian psychoanalysis, mainly the theories about the collective unconscious and individuation.

There are altogether four chapters in this thesis. Chapter one is an overview of *The Memoirs of a Survivor*. Based on the critical reviews so far both for and against Lessing's experiment in conscious writing, this thesis holds that *The Memoirs of a Survivor* is in fact a story about the process of consciousness evolvement, and the narrator is the only one and true protagonist while other main characters are symbols for the different aspects of the narrator's psyche. Chapters two and three are the intensive analysis of the text itself. On the one hand, the world behind the wall is divided into the personal and impersonal realms, respectively corresponding to Jung's personal and collective unconscious. There the narrator reexperiences her complexes due to her childhood traumas and realizes the root of the compartmentalization of the society. With the metaphorical efforts behind the wall, the narrator experiences an epiphany in the six-sided room and clarifies the goal of her individuation, becoming able to penetrate into the realm of the collective unconscious which is full of archetypal images. On the other hand, the collapsing city serves as a conscious

projection of the mental state within. Social order breaks down as a result of the malfunction of authorities and various rescue attempts all end in failure, indicating that the narrator is facing the crisis of the disintegration of her identity that is represented by other main characters in the novel. While Emily is a persona cultivated according to the paradigm of the society, Gerald symbolizes the animus for the narrator, and Hugo the dog embodies the basic instinct in humanity. As the situation deteriorates, they are overwhelmed by the Underground kids, the symbol for the anarchy of the unconscious. Chapter four focuses on the obscure ending scene as the destination for the narrator's spiritual journey. As the wall dissolves, the narrator witnesses two important archetypes signifying wholeness, the egg and the anonymous presence. By walking across the wall, the narrator absorbs all her alter egos and achieves the union of the conscious and the unconscious, fulfilling her individuation and reintegrating her identity as a whole being.

Based on the analysis above, this thesis concludes that appearing pessimistic in its tone and atmosphere, *The Memoirs of a Survivor* actually conveys Lessing's optimism. As long as people listen to the voice from their unconscious instead of blindly following the bondages in the empirical world, they can overcome any breakdown and be reintegrated again.

Key Words: *The Memoirs of a Survivor*; psychoanalysis; disintegration; reintegration

摘 要

作为 2007 年诺贝尔文学奖得主，多丽丝·莱辛是当今世界最具影响力的战后作家之一。秉持作家对社会的责任感，莱辛从未停止过对如今支离破碎的社会中现代人精神困境的关注。这一主题始终贯穿于莱辛的作品中，并在《幸存者回忆录》中得到了集中体现。关于该作品主要有三大争论热点，其一在于墙后的世界，其二是叙述者与艾米莉之间的关系，其三是令人费解的结局场景。本文试图借助荣格心理学中集体潜意识和个体化进程等相关理论对小说中的意象和事件进行分析以阐明对这三个问题的看法。

论文共分四章。第一章为总述。在目前已有的评论的基础上，本文认为《幸存者回忆录》实质上描述了意识发展的过程，且叙述者是故事中唯一的真正主角，而其它主要角色则代表叙述者人格的不同层面。第二章和第三章为文本分析。一方面，墙后的世界分为个人与非个人两个领域，分别对应荣格理论中的个人潜意识与集体潜意识。在那里叙述者回忆了其童年的心理创伤并且意识到当前社会支离破碎的根源。在墙后作了一番隐喻性的努力之后，叙述者在六角屋里经历了精神顿悟，明确了其个体化进程的目标，并得以进入充满原型意象的集体潜意识领域。另一方面，崩溃的城市是涣散的内在精神状态的外在表现。由于管理阶层无能，社会秩序陷入混乱，这一切都象征着叙述者所面临的人格分裂危机。其中艾米莉代表着社会陈规造就的人格面具，杰拉尔德象征着叙述者人格中的阿尼姆斯，艾米莉的狗雨果则暗示着人的本性。随着情况的恶化，他们逐渐受制于来自地下的象征着潜意识最深处无政府状态的一群孩子。第四章集中分析作为叙述者精神之旅终点的结局场景。随着墙的消解，叙述者看见了象征整体的两个最重要的原型意象：蛋及无名的存在。跨过这堵墙，叙述者与她人格的其它方面合为一体，并且实现了意识与潜意识的融合，完成了她的个体化进程，重塑了其完整的人格。

基于以上分析，本文认为尽管《幸存者回忆录》的基调和氛围看起来是悲观的，但该小说实质上还是传达了莱辛的乐观倾向。只要人们不盲目遵从现代社会中的种种陈规，认真倾听来自自身潜意识的心声，他们就能避免这一精神崩溃的

危机，实现心理的再次融合。

关键词：《幸存者回忆录》 精神分析 心理分裂 心理融合

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Introduction

Venerated by her readers as a dear granny, Doris Lessing has already become one of the most influential writers in English nowadays. Lessing is fairly prolific and always keeps changing in her works. She has produced a canon with various genres, including novels, short stories, science fictions, poems, dramas, autobiographies, lectures, essays, opera libretti and even comics, and the backgrounds for her stories range from the African continent to the outer space. She is associated with a series of important movements in the twentieth century, such as Freudian and Jungian psychology, Marxism, feminism, existentialism and mysticism, and enjoys experimenting in different narrative strategies and writing techniques. In spite of all these changes in her techniques, however, there is one thing remaining consistent throughout Lessing's writing career, which is her concern for the people who cannot achieve their individual wholeness as a result of being trapped in a fragmentary and compartmentalized world. This was why Lessing was praised by the Swedish Academy as "an epicist of the female experience, who with scepticism, fire and visionary power has subjected a divided civilisation to scrutiny" when she was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature at the senior age of eighty-eight in 2007.

Lessing's devotion to the human fate comes from her own experiences, especially her early life on the veld of Southern Rhodesia, where she enjoyed relative freedom from the confinements for a common woman in the class-ridden society of England. This freedom brought her independent mind and enabled her to step back in the marginality to observe our society from an overall perspective. What she has seen from that stance was first of all the plight of her own family. Lessing's father, an amputee due to the first World War, led his family to Rhodesia in search of the return to nature, whereas her mother was always hoping to retrieve a civilized social life as that in England. The living condition of the family was not so poor as that of the black, but was far from the standard of affluence in the eyes of the white. Caught between

these oppositions, Lessing lived an unpleasant life in her childhood and learnt a most important lesson as she summarized in her autobiography later: “Don’t be like them. Meaning, never let yourself be trapped. In other words, I was rejecting the human condition, which is to be trapped by circumstances.” (Lessing, 1994: 120) What is more, Lessing takes this as a responsibility for a writer to wake up her readers who are still unaware of their own plights. Similarly, Lessing refuses to classify her works into any category though she has been through all sorts of intellectual and political movements, but prefers to view them as a whole. Although the theme remains unchanged, there is an obvious development in terms of cognition in Lessing’s canon, which is evident from the contrast between her earlier and recent works. While her first novel, *The Grass Is Singing* (1950), merely tells a realistic tragedy of Mary Turner from an objective perspective, Anna Wulf is gradually becoming conscious of her own plight by recording her own life in *The Golden Notebook* (1962), Lessing’s most well-known representative work, and later Martha Quest in *The Four-Gated City* (1969), the last volume of *The Children of Violence* series, criticizes the blind prejudice of the contemporary society against the people with extra-sensory perception and is ready to accept this transcendental sphere herself. With these works, Lessing not only predicts a tragic end for human beings brought by the trap of the modern society, but also asks her readers to consider the cause of such a consequence, encouraging them to seek for their own salvation.

As the last novel that Lessing wrote before she departed into the outer space in the space fictions *Canopus in Argos: Archives* series, *The Memoirs of a Survivor* marks one peak in the development of Lessing’s cognition. Different from Lessing’s previous works of which the realistic style has won her great fame, *The Memoirs of a Survivor* shows mixed characteristics of the two genres, indicating Lessing’s transition from realism to science fiction. At first glance, *The Memoirs of a Survivor* is no more than a record of the narrator’s experiences in a collapsing city, but what makes it unusual from other dystopian novels is that Lessing has created a world out of the paradigm of time and space behind the wall of the sitting room in the narrator’s flat, which gives rise to much controversy about this book. Some critics hold that the

world behind the wall is authentic and it presents a case of the failed family education that results in the doom of the society, while some others argue that the world behind the wall is an imaginary one for the narrator to escape from the ruined reality outside her flat. This debate further leads to another argument concerning the relationship between the narrator and other characters in the novel, especially Emily Kate Cartright, who seems more like the heroine of the series of incidents recounted by the narrator. Critics wonder if these characters are all separate individuals of their own or they are created by the narrator as some kind of symbols. The ending of *The Memoirs of a Survivor* attracts much attention as well. Some people found it unsatisfactory and reckoned the scene in which the main characters walk across the wall into the other world as a pessimistic mental escape. The whereabouts of the narrator also causes much confusion for the lack of clear description. All these obscurities have increased the difficulty in understanding Lessing's true intention concealed under the seemingly straightforward plot, but on the other hand, they also expand the possibilities for various interpretations, and this is where the glamour of *The Memoirs of a Survivor* lies.

Taking Lessing's concern about the human fate into consideration, this thesis intends to interpret *The Memoirs of a Survivor* as a work of psychoanalysis with the help of the Jungian theory. What the world behind the wall shows are not only scenes of family life but also include an unfamiliar realm for common people, which inevitably drives people to reflect on it out of the framework of rationalism. Meanwhile, although the descriptions of the lives in the city in which the narrator dwells possess an obvious style of realism that Lessing excels in, the world outside the flat is, in fact, a parallel projection of the state behind the wall rather than an authentic one as some critics think. This thesis will take both of the two worlds as the components of human consciousness, with the city corresponding to the conscious and the world behind the wall to the unconscious, and thus the narrator's visits across the wall can be seen as a sort of spiritual journey. By analyzing images and incidents in the two worlds, this thesis attempts to explore the reasons for the disintegration of the narrator's identity symbolized in the breakdown of the two worlds, aiming to

convey Lessing's warning for her readers against the traps of this fragmentary and compartmentalized world and at the same time revealing Lessing's hint to gain a reintegration of the psyche in the process of individuation in the narrator.

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Chapter One An Overview

1.1 Literature Review

Before the publication of *The Memoirs of a Survivor*, many critics had implied their disappointment at Lessing's tendency of distancing from the realistic portrait that she excelled in and turning to a seemingly more and more mystic description in her two earlier novels, namely *Briefing for a Descent into Hell* (1971) and *The Summer Before the Dark* (1973). Therefore, when *The Memoirs of a Survivor* was first published in 1974, there were inevitable waves of hostility and rejection from both readers and critics. The former wondered what was real in this novel, rather confused by the existence of the world behind the wall, whereas the latter found that the narrator's shifting movement between these two worlds generated a big problem for people to adapt to and were inclined to conclude that *The Memoirs of a Survivor* was no more than an obsolete allegory, or even more harshly, a fairy tale of escapism. Susan Fromberg Schaeffer pointed out in her review "When Walls Tumble Down" that the failure of this book lay in its inability to clarify what it wanted to express, as "it asks questions; it gives answers. But it does not answer many, many questions; and many answers it does give are really inadequate." (Schaeffer, 1975: 136) What is more, the ending scene of this book seemed to be the focus of the controversy. Besty Draine in her "Changing Frames: Doris Lessing's *Memoirs of a Survivor*" criticized the depiction of the world behind the wall at the end of the book as unsuccessful as "neither vivid to the senses nor compelling to the emotions; furthermore, it fails to have a stimulating effect upon the will" (Draine, 1979: 59), which resulted in the unwillingness for readers to follow the characters there, and thus readers were left in a dilemma because the real world behind them was in an unrescuable doom: "Expecting to take up a position in a well-framed realm, the reader finds that no particular frame is immediately applicable, or the frame that he thought was applicable no longer seems to be, or he cannot bind himself within the frame that does apparently apply. He

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